

AMENDMENTS TO AND LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A toothbrush comprising a handle, a head and the head mounted to one end of said handle, said head including a cleaning element carrier, said cleaning element carrier being in the form of a peripheral frame having an open central area ~~and being fixed with respect to the handle~~, a plurality of sets of ~~joints~~ slots formed in an outer surface of said frame and located at spaced intervals on said frame, a plurality of generally thin ~~support members~~ plates, cleaning elements secured to and extending outwardly from said ~~support members~~ plates along the length of said ~~support members~~ plates, each of said ~~support members~~ plates having a first end secured to the frame at one of the ~~joints~~ slots and a second end secured to the frame at one of the ~~joints~~ slots, each of said ~~support members~~ plates being disposed transversely and laterally across said open area of said frame, the lateral ~~support members~~ plates being generally parallel to a longitudinal axis of the handle and perpendicular to the transverse ~~support members~~ plates and the lateral ~~support members~~ plates being spaced equidistant to each other and the transverse ~~support members~~ plates being spaced equidistant to each other, and said ~~support members~~ plates creating an open lattice pattern having through holes over said open area of said frame to facilitate the cleaning of said head.

2. (Cancelled) ~~The toothbrush of claim 1 wherein said support members are plates, said joints being slots formed in the outer surface of said frame, and said plates being mounted in said slots.~~

3. (Currently Amended) The toothbrush of claim 1 wherein said cleaning elements are bristles made of a thermoplastic material, and said ~~support~~

~~members being~~ plates are made of a thermoplastic material having a melting temperature similar to the melting temperature of said bristle thermoplastic material.

4. (Original) The toothbrush of claim 3 wherein said plates and said bristles are made of the same material.

5. (Original) The toothbrush of claim 3 wherein each of said plates and its bristles form a unit, said unit having a portion which is transparent to laser light wavelength, and a further portion which is laser beam absorbing.

6. (Previously Presented) The toothbrush of claim 5 wherein said laser beam absorbing portion is positioned at an interior portion of said plate.

7. (Original) The toothbrush of claim 6 wherein said laser beam absorbing portion is a weld interface colorant.

8. (Original) The toothbrush of claim 1 wherein said ~~support members are~~ plates ~~connected to~~ are mounted in said ~~joints~~ slots of said frame by a mounting structure selected from the group consisting of a mechanical fit, an adhesive connection, ultrasonic welding, induction welding, orbital friction welding, and hot wire welding.

9. (Original) The toothbrush of claim 8 wherein said mounting structure comprises a mechanical fit connection between said plates and said frame.

10. (Original) The toothbrush of claim 8 wherein said mounting structure comprises an adhesive connection between said plates and said frame.

11. (Cancelled) ~~The toothbrush of claim 1 wherein said joints comprise slots in said frame, said support members being plates, said plates being located in said slots, and said plates being welded to said frame.~~

12. (Original) The toothbrush of claim 1 wherein said cleaning elements are bristles.

13. (Original) The toothbrush of claim 12 wherein said bristles have rounded cleaning ends.

14. (Original) The toothbrush of claim 12 wherein said bristles form a pattern of differing length.

15. (Currently Amended) The toothbrush of claim 1 wherein each of said ~~support members is~~ cleaning elements is an integral strand attached to a base member ~~having integral strands, and said integral strands being said cleaning elements.~~

16. (Currently Amended) The toothbrush of claim 15 wherein each of said base members is laser welded to each of said ~~plates, and said plate being mounted to said frame at a set of said joints.~~

17. (Currently Amended) ~~The A~~ toothbrush ~~of claim 15~~ comprising a handle, a head and the head mounted to one end of said handle, said head including a cleaning element carrier, said cleaning element carrier being in the form of a peripheral frame having an open central area, a plurality of sets of joints formed in an outer surface of said frame and located at spaced intervals on said frame, a plurality of base members each having integral strands, wherein each of said base members is a nylon base string and said integral strands are cleaning elements extending outwardly from said base members, each of said base members being stretched across said frame and ~~secured to said frame at a set of said joints~~ having a first end secured to the frame at one of the joints and a second end secured to the frame at one of the joints, each of said base members being disposed transversely and laterally across said open area of said frame, the lateral base members being generally parallel to a longitudinal axis of the handle and perpendicular to the transverse base members and the lateral base members being spaced equidistant to each other and the transverse base members being spaced equidistant to each other, and said base members creating an open lattice pattern having through holes over said open area of said frame to facilitate the cleaning of said head.

18. (Currently Amended) The toothbrush of claim ~~15~~ 17 wherein each of said joints comprises an arcuate seat, said base member conforming in size and shape to said arcuate seat, and said base member being mounted in said arcuate seat.

19-30 (Cancelled).